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CLASSIFICATION ~~CONFIDENTIAL~~ SECRET CONTROL/US OFFICIALS ONLYCOUNTRY Soviet Zone of Germany REPORT NO. 25X1ATOPIC Elections to the People's Congress in the Soviet Zone of GermanyEVALUATION See below PLACE OBTAINED DATE OF CONTENT DATE OBTAINED 25X1A DATE PREPARED 2 August 1949 25X1AREFERENCES NonePAGES two ENCLOSURES (NO. & TYPE) None

REMARKS

SOURCE

25X1X

Elections to the People's Congress in the Soviet Zone of Germany

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 25X1A

25X1 1. received a teletype message for the HALBERSTADT Police Office from Robert SIEMERT, Minister of the Interior of Saxony-Anhalt, directing that all invalid ballots be counted as "yes" votes, in the afternoon of 15 May 1949.

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2. All the voting officers of the eight polling places of ZERRERNICK were German Socialist Unity Party (SED) members. Counting of the ballots started on 15 and 16 May 1949, shortly after 8 p.m., and, returns were available at some polling stations at 8:30 p.m. They showed a small majority for the "Nos." (On the two days about 50 percent of the vote "No", 10 percent invalid and 40 percent "Yes"). The SED burgo-master and a member of the SED Information Service appeared at the polling stations on both days between 8:30 and 11 p.m. On the first election day they brought with them so-called "new directives" for the counting of ballots, and on both days enforced their execution. Records of the returns were destroyed in those polling stations in which the ballots had already been counted, and counting was resumed in accordance with the new directives which provided that each invalid ballot was to be regarded as a "yes" vote. Only those ballots on which the cross was marked exactly in the center of the "No" circle were accepted. All other "No" ballots were counted as "yes" votes. Incidents occurred in some polling

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stations when the directives were announced, even some confirmed SED members refusing to carry out these directives. The burgomaster and the member of the SED Information Service thereupon started to count the votes themselves. They intimidated and threatened the presiding officers and forced them to sign the polling records. Sixteen percent of the ZEPERNICK votes were thus converted into "Yes" votes. Sixty-six percent of the faked returns were "Yes" votes.

3. About 30 percent of the true "Yes" votes were counted in FALKENSEE. The presiding electoral officer, an SED member, had all improperly marked ballots counted as "Yes" votes and all improperly marked "No" votes counted as invalid. When the other members of the election committee objected to this procedure, the presiding officer declared that he acted on orders of Minister of the Interior BECHLER.

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